a)   an auctioneer's system and at least two user systems, the auctioneer's system communicatively coupled to user systems;

b)   said user systems including:

b1)   means for receiving messages from the auctioneer's system and for displaying those messages;

b2)   means for receiving bid related information from users, said information including bids for television licenses or associated derivative rights; and

b3)   means for transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system; and

c)   said auctioneer's system including:

c1)   means for generating and transmitting messages to user systems, said messages including a non-final message indicating that an auction will continue and a final message indicating that an auction has terminated;

c2)   means for receiving bid information from user systems; and

c3)   decision means responsive to the bid information received from the user systems for determining whether an auction should continue or terminate, said decision means including:

c31)   means to initiate the generation of a non-final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to continue an auction; and

c32)   means to initiate the generation of a final message to at least one user system in response to a determination to terminate an auction.

54.   A system as recited in claim 53 wherein the bid information includes a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset identification S_i identifies a set of licenses and where the value parameter P_i specifies a payment proposed by the user in return for the licenses of subset S_i.

23

~~55.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~54~~ wherein the decision means includes a selecting means to select an n-tuple of bids (S_i, P_i), at most one from each user system, which selection is effective to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of all of the selected bids are compatible.

24

~~56.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~54~~ wherein the decision means selects bids to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of every pair of selected bids are disjoint.

25

~~57.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~53~~ wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

26

~~58.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~56~~ wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

27

~~59.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~58~~ wherein the decision means compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i of an earlier round of selected bids.

28

~~60.~~ A method for conducting a computer implemented auction of television licenses or associated derivative rights to a plurality of users comprising:

a)   providing an auctioneer's system;

b)   receiving bid related information from users, said information including bids for television licenses or associated derivative rights, and transmitting bid information to the auctioneer's system;

c)   determining at the auctioneer's system, in response to the bid information received from users, whether the auction should continue or terminate;

3

d) transmitting a message indicating that the auction will continue to at least one user, in response to a determination to continue the auction; and

e) transmitting a message indicating that the auction will terminate to at least one user, in response to a determination to terminate the auction.

29

~~61.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~60~~ 28 wherein the bid information includes a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset identification S_i identifies a set of licenses and where the value parameter P_i specifies a payment proposed by the user in return for the licenses of subset S_i.

30

~~62.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~61~~ 29 wherein the determining includes selecting an n-tuple of bids (S_i, P_i), at most one from each user system, which selection is effective to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of all of the selected bids are compatible.

31

~~63.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~61~~ 29 wherein the determining selects bids to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of every pair of selected bids are disjoint.

32

~~64.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~60~~ 28 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

33

~~65.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~61~~ 29 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

4

34

~~66.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~65~~ **33** wherein the determining compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i of an earlier round of selected bids.

35

~~67.~~ A system for conducting a computer implemented auction of television licenses or associated derivative rights, said system including a plurality of user systems operated by bidders and an auctioneer's system, the auctioneer's system being communicatively coupled to a plurality of user systems, comprising:

a)   means for receiving bid information for the television licenses or associated derivative rights from bidders at a plurality of user systems,

b)   means for transmitting signals based on the bid information from user systems to the auctioneer's system, and

c)   means for determining, based on the signals, the television licenses or associated derivative rights to be assigned to the bidders.

36

~~68.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~67~~ **35** wherein the bid information includes a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset identification S_i identifies a set of licenses and where the value parameter P_i specifies a payment proposed by the user in return for the licenses of subset S_i.

37

~~69.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~68~~ **36** wherein the decision means includes a selecting means to select an n-tuple of bids (S_i, P_i), at most one from each user system, which selection is effective to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of all of the selected bids are compatible

11302_1

38.

~~70.~~   A system as recited in claim ~~68~~ 36 wherein the decision means selects bids to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of every pair of selected bids are disjoint.

39

~~71.~~   A system as recited in claim ~~67~~ 35 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

40

~~72.~~   A system as recited in claim ~~70~~ 38 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

41

~~73.~~   A system as recited in claim ~~72~~ 40 wherein the decision means compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i of an earlier round of selected bids.

42

~~74.~~   A method for conducting a computer implemented auction of television licenses or associated derivative rights in a system including a plurality of user systems operated by bidders and an auctioneer's system, the auctioneer's system being communicatively coupled to a plurality of user systems, the method comprising:

a)   receiving bid information for the television licenses or associated derivative rights from bidders at a plurality of user systems,

b)   transmitting signals based on the bid information from user systems to the auctioneer's system, and

c)   determining, based on the signals, the television licenses or associated derivative rights to be assigned to the bidders.

43

~~75.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~74~~ 42 wherein the bid information includes a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset

identification S_i identifies a set of licenses and where the value parameter P_i specifies a payment proposed by the user in return for the licenses of subset S_i.

44   43
~~76.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~75~~ wherein the determining includes selecting an n-tuple of bids (S_i, P_i), at most one from each user system, which selection is effective to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of all of the selected bids are compatible.

45   43
~~77.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~75~~ wherein the determining selects bids to optimize the sum of the different value parameters P_i of the selected bids subject to the constraint that the associated subsets S_i of every pair of selected bids are disjoint.

46   42
~~78.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~74~~ wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

47   45
~~79.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~77~~ wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

48   47
~~80.~~   A method as recited in claim ~~79~~ wherein the determining compares the sum of the parameters P_i from the selected bids to a function of the sum of the parameters P_i of an earlier round of selected bids.

49
~~81.~~   A computer system for implementing an auction of television licenses or associated derivative rights, said auction including a plurality of bidders, comprising:

    a)   means for inputting, into the computer, bids for television licenses or associated derivative rights;

b) means for determining, based on the bids, an allocation of television licenses or associated derivative rights to bidders; and

c) means for outputting, from the computer, the allocation of television licenses or associated derivative rights to bidders.

50
~~82.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~81~~ 49 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

51
~~83.~~ A system as recited in claim ~~81~~ 49 wherein the bids include a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset identification S_i identifies a set of licenses and where the value parameter P_i specifies a payment proposed by the user in return for the licenses of subset S_i.

52
~~84.~~ A method for using a computer to implement an auction of television licenses or associated derivative rights, said auction including a plurality of bidders, comprising:

a) inputting, into the computer, bids for television licenses or associated derivative rights;

b) determining, based on the bids, an allocation of television licenses or associated derivative rights to bidders; and

c) outputting, from the computer, the allocation of television licenses or associated derivative rights to bidders.

53
~~85.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~84~~ 52 wherein the auction is conducted in multiple rounds.

54
~~86.~~ A method as recited in claim ~~84~~ 52 wherein the bids include a value parameter P_i and an associated license subset identification S_i, where the license subset identification S_i identifies

8